

and hidden interests can't bankroll our elections—and if our existing approach to campaign finance can't pass muster in the courts, we need to work together to find a real solution. We've got to make voting easier, not harder, and modernize it for the way we live now. And over the course of this year, I intend to travel the country to push for reforms that do.

But I can't do these things on my own. Changes in our political process—in not just who gets elected but how they get elected—that will only happen when the American people demand it. It will depend on you. That's what's meant by a government of, by, and for the people.

What I'm asking for is hard. It's easier to be cynical; to accept that change isn't possible, and politics is hopeless, and to believe that our voices and actions don't matter. But if we give up now, then we forsake a better future. Those with money and power will gain greater control over the decisions that could send a young soldier to war, or allow another economic disaster, or roll back the equal rights and voting rights that generations of Americans have fought, even died, to secure. As frustration grows, there will be voices urging us to fall back into tribes, to scapegoat fellow citizens who don't look like us, or pray like us, or vote like we do, or share the same back-ground.

We can't afford to go down that path. It won't deliver the economy we want, or the security we want, but most of all, it contradicts everything that makes us the envy of the world.

So, my fellow Americans, whatever you may believe, whether you prefer one party or no party, our collective future depends on your willingness to uphold your obligations as a citizen. To vote. To speak out. To stand up for others, especially the weak, especially the vulnerable, knowing that each of us is only here because somebody, somewhere, stood up for us. To stay active in our public life so it reflects the goodness and decency and optimism that I see in the American people every single day.

It won't be easy. Our brand of democracy is hard. But I can promise that a year from now, when I no longer hold this office, I'll be right there with you as a citizen—inspired by those voices of fairness and vision, of grit and good humor and kindness that have helped America travel so far. Voices that help us see ourselves not first and foremost as black or white or Asian or Latino, not as gay or straight, immigrant or native born; not as Democrats or Republicans, but as Americans first, bound by a common creed. Voices Dr. King believed would have the final word—voices of unarmed truth and unconditional love.

They're out there, those voices. They don't get a lot of attention, nor do they seek it, but they are busy doing the work this country needs doing.

I see them everywhere I travel in this incredible country of ours. I see you. I

know you're there. You're the reason why I have such incredible confidence in our future. Because I see your quiet, sturdy citizenship all the time.

I see it in the worker on the assembly line who clocked extra shifts to keep his company open, and the boss who pays him higher wages to keep him on board.

I see it in the Dreamer who stays up late to finish her science project, and the teacher who comes in early because he knows she might someday cure a disease.

I see it in the American who served his time, and dreams of starting over—and the business owner who gives him that second chance. The protester determined to prove that justice matters, and the young cop walking the beat, treating everybody with respect, doing the brave, quiet work of keeping us safe.

I see it in the soldier who gives almost everything to save his brothers, the nurse who tends to him 'til he can run a marathon, and the community that lines up to cheer him on.

It's the son who finds the courage to come out as who he is, and the father whose love for that son overrides everything he's been taught.

I see it in the elderly woman who will wait in line to cast her vote as long as she has to; the new citizen who casts his for the first time; the volunteers at the polls who believe every vote should count, because each of them in different ways know how much that precious right is worth.

That's the America I know. That's the country we love. Clear-eyed. Big-hearted. Optimistic that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word. That's what makes me so hopeful about our future. Because of you. I believe in you. That's why I stand here confident that the State of our Union is strong.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, January 12, 2016.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:52 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 142. An act to require special packaging for liquid nicotine containers, and for other purposes.

S. 1115. An act to close out expired grants.

S. 1629. An act to revise certain authorities of the District of Columbia courts, the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia, and the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 598. An act to provide taxpayers with an annual report disclosing the cost and performance of Government programs and areas of duplication among them, and for other purposes.

H.R. 653. An act to amend section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Freedom of Information Act), to provide for greater public access to information, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1069. An act to amend title 44, United States Code, to require information on contributors to Presidential library fundraising organizations, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1777. An act to amend the Act of August 25, 1958, commonly known as the "Former Presidents Act of 1958", with respect to the monetary allowance payable to a former President, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3231. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to protect unpaid interns in the Federal Government from workplace harassment and discrimination, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 653. An act to amend section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Freedom of Information Act), to provide for greater public access to information, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 1777. An act to amend the Act of August 25, 1958, commonly known as the "Former Presidents Act of 1958", with respect to the monetary allowance payable to a former President, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4003. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Spinetoram; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9933-39-OCSPP) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4004. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Propiconazole; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9940-01-OCSPP) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4005. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; ATR-GIE Avions de Transport Regional Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2015-0682)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4006. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. Helicopters" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2015-3783))